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(54) **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR VENTING A COOKING DEVICE**

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H05B 6/64 (2006.01)
H05B 6/80 (2006.01)
F24C 15/32 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ***H05B 6/6476*** (2013.01)

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USPC ..... 219/725, 757, 681, 682, 400, 388; 126/21 A, 20, 273.5; 426/523; 96/4
See application file for complete search history.

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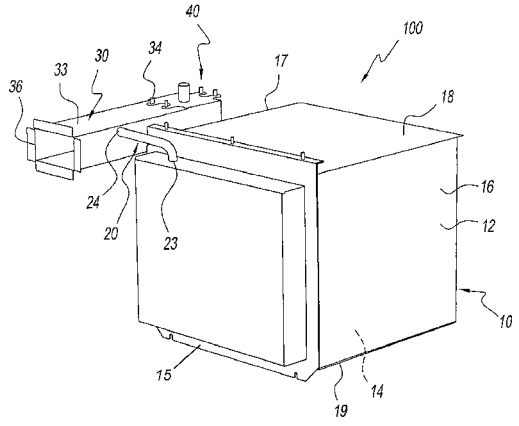
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A cooking device includes an airflow system that generates airflow within a duct and a cooking chamber that is configured to vent heated air and/or steam within the cooking chamber to the duct. The heated air and/or steam vented to the duct is accelerated by the airflow.

11 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets



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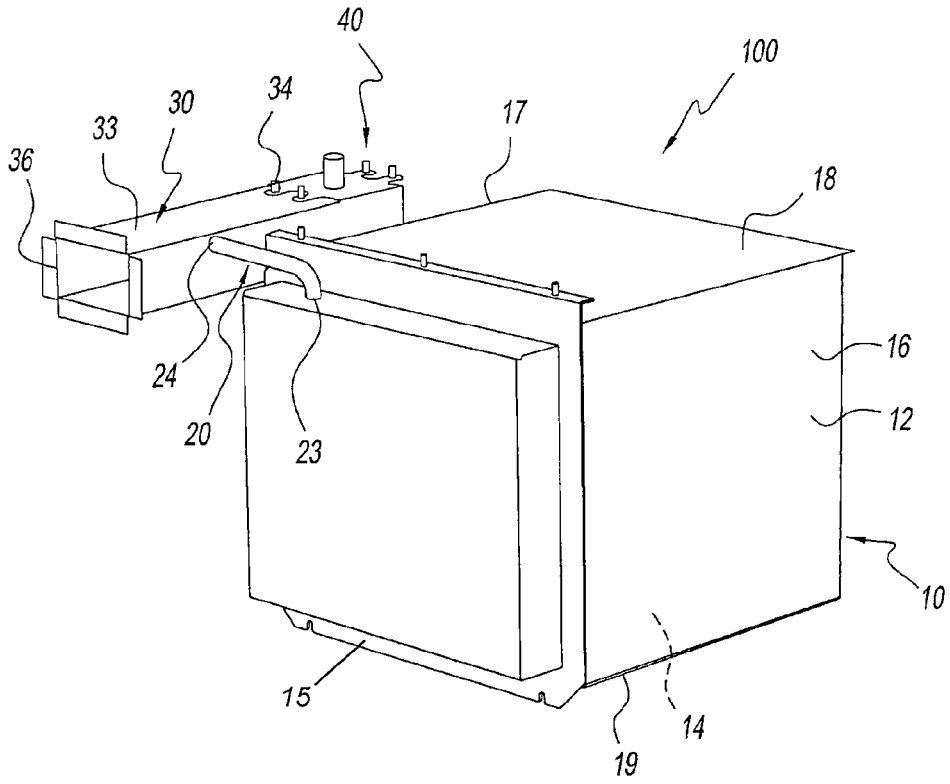

Fig. 1

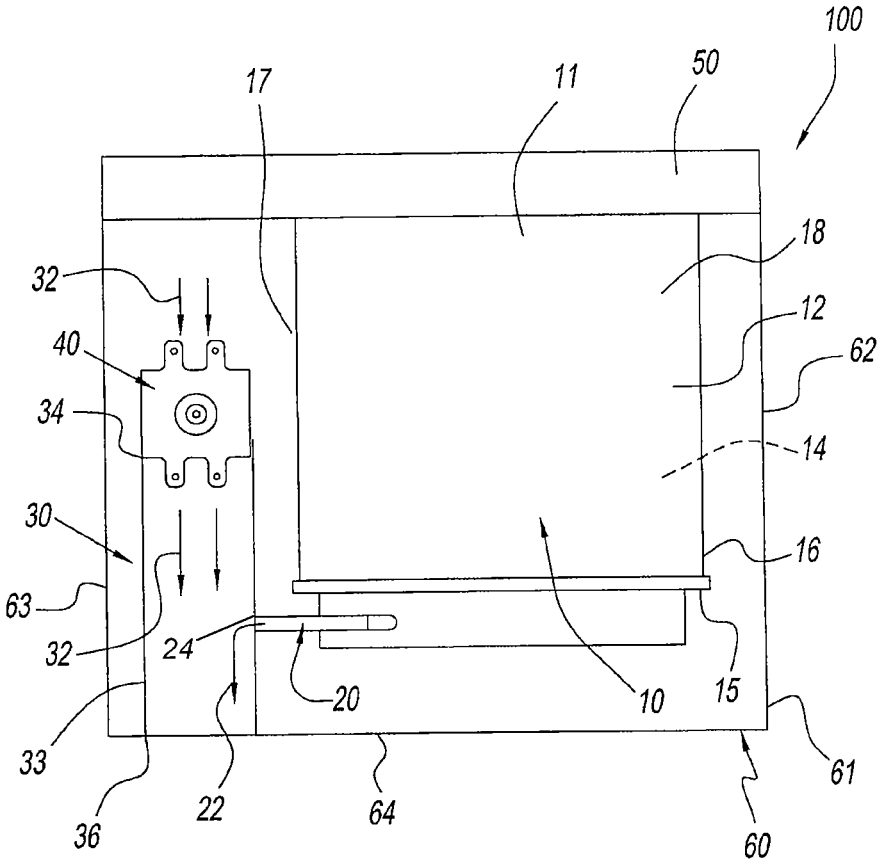
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Fig. 2

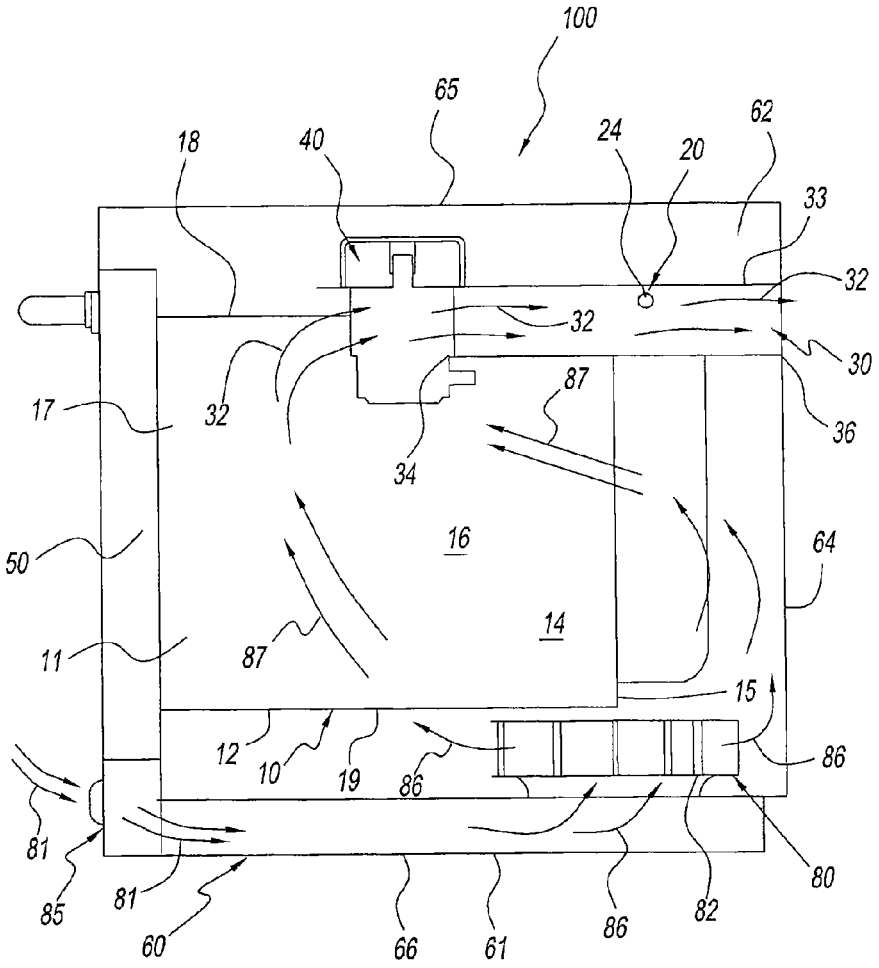
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Fig. 3

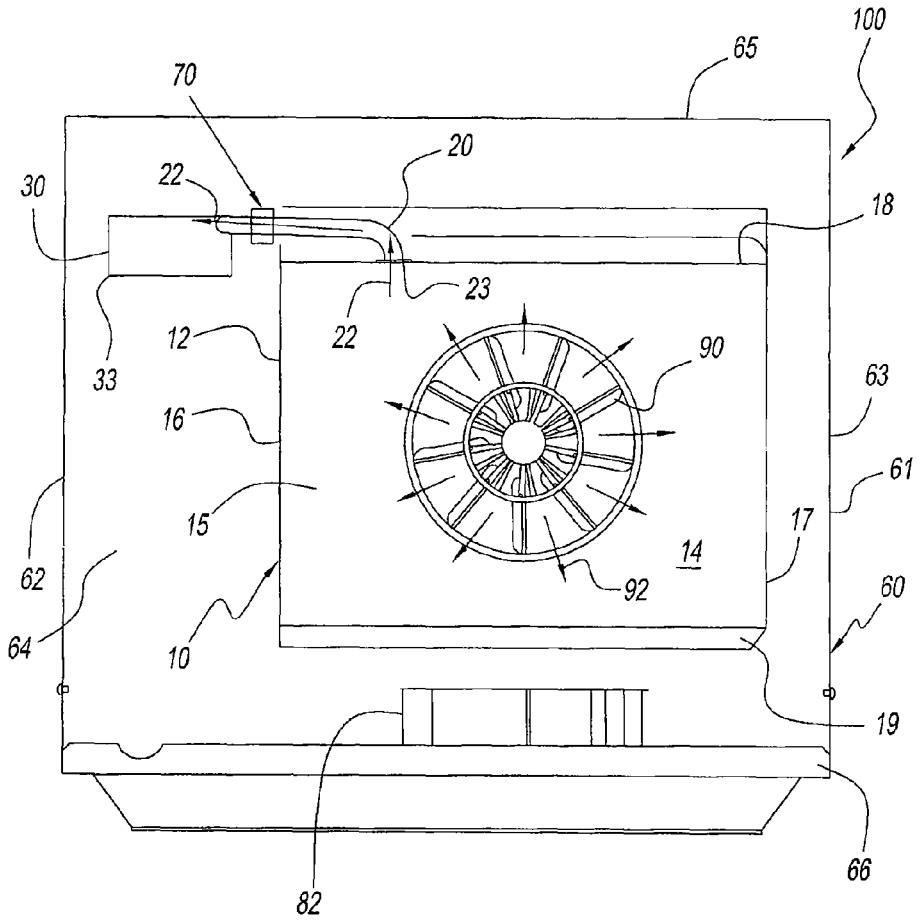
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Fig. 4

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR VENTING A COOKING DEVICE

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/239,007, filed Sep. 1, 2009. U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/239,007, filed Sep. 1, 2009 is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present disclosure relates generally to venting a cooking device. More particularly, the present disclosure relates to venting a cooking chamber of a cooking device into an exhaust of air.

2. Description of Related Art

Most food products, when cooked in a cooking chamber of an oven, produce an amount of steam. This expanding gas or steam needs to escape from the cooking chamber via either an access port, or a door to the cooking chamber. Steam vents generally are between the cooking chamber and ambient environment to allow controlled dissipation of pressure by exhausting exhaust gases including the expanding gas or steam through the steam vent to the ambient environment. The exiting exhaust gases can reach very high temperatures causing both the oven and ambient environment to be adversely affected by the heat. Further, since the exhaust gases can become polluted with airborne contaminates from the food product, the contaminates, e.g., grease, can condense on exit from the vent and drip/stain/contaminate surrounding environments.

Accordingly, it has been determined by the present disclosure, there is a need for a device to reduce a temperature of exhaust gases when exiting a cooking device. There is a further need to decrease a concentration of particles within the exhaust gases when exiting a cooking device.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A cooking device is provided that includes an airflow system that generates airflow within a duct and a cooking chamber that is configured to vent heated air and/or steam within the cooking chamber to the duct. The heated air and/or steam vented to the duct is accelerated by the airflow.

The above-described and other advantages and features of the present disclosure will be appreciated and understood by those skilled in the art from the following detailed description, drawings, and appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a partial rear perspective view of a cooking device according to the present disclosure;

FIG. **2** is a partial top, cross-sectional view of the exemplary embodiment of the cooking device of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **3** is a partial side, cross-sectional view of the exemplary embodiment of the cooking device of FIG. **1**; and

FIG. **4** is a partial front, cross-sectional view of the exemplary embodiment of the cooking device of FIG. **1**.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring to the drawings and in particular to FIG. **1**, an exemplary embodiment of a cooking device according to the present disclosure is generally referred to by reference numeral **100**. Cooking device **100** may be any device that heats food, such as, for example, an oven.

Cooking device **100** has a cooking chamber **10**. Cooking chamber **10** has an enclosure **12** surrounding a cavity **14**. Enclosure **12** includes a rear wall **15**, side walls **16** and **17**, a top wall **18**, and a bottom wall **19**. Enclosure **12** has an open portion **11**, as shown in FIG. **2**.

Cooking device has a duct **30**. Duct **30** is a conduit **33** having an inlet **34** and an outlet **36**. Duct **30** may be connected to a magnetron **40** of a microwave system.

Cavity **14** is in fluid communication with duct **30**. Cavity **14** is in fluid communication with duct through pipe **20**. Pipe **20** has an inlet **23** and an outlet **24**.

Referring now to FIG. **2**, duct **30** is in fluid communication with an airflow system that generates an airflow **32**. Airflow **32** enters duct **30** through inlet **34** and exits cooking device through outlet **36**.

Heated air and/or steam is produced within cavity **14** that increases pressure within cavity **14**. In order to relieve the pressure within cavity **14**, a portion of the heated air and/or steam is vented to duct **30**, as shown by arrow **22**. The heated air and/or steam is accelerated by airflow **32** as the heated air and/or steam flows into duct **30**.

The portion of the heated air and/or steam that is vented to duct **30** is vented through pipe **20** to duct **30**, as shown by arrow **22**. The heated air and/or steam is accelerated by airflow **32** as the heated air and/or steam flows through pipe **20** into duct **30**. Pipe **20** is connected to an upper rear portion of cooking chamber **10**. However, pipe **20** may be connected to cooking chamber **10** at other locations. Pipe **20** has a shape and size that can vary with dimensions of cooking device **100**. Duct **30** may have a size to give optimum airflow for cooling cooking device components, for example, magnetron **40**, and, therefore, flow of air over pipe **20**. For example, a size of pipe **20** is substantially smaller than a size of duct **30**, such as, 1:1000.

Cooking device **100** has a housing **60**, as shown in FIG. **2**. Housing **60** surrounds cooking chamber **10** and duct **30**. Housing **60** has an outer wall **61** that has a first sidewall **62**, a second sidewall **63**, a top wall **65**, a bottom wall **66**, and a rear wall **64**. Duct **30** is positioned so that airflow out of outlet **36** passes through an opening in rear wall **64**. Housing **60** is connected to a door **50**. Open portion **11** is covered by door **50** in a closed position, as shown in FIG. **2**. Door **50** can be selectively rotated away from cooking device **100** to uncover open portion **11** to provide access to cavity **14**.

As shown in FIG. **3**, airflow **32** is generated by an airflow system **80**. A fan **82** draws cool, filtered air from the ambient environment outside of cooking device **100** through an opening **85** in housing **60**, as shown by arrows **81**. The air flows between housing **60** and cooking chamber **10** through fan **82**, as shown by arrows **86**, the air flows from fan **82** up to magnetron **40**, as shown by arrows **87**. Fan **82** creates an internal air pressure within housing **60** which forms airflow **32** that flows through duct **30** to the ambient environment outside of cooking device **100**.

The air from the ambient environment that is drawn into cooking device **100** is at a cooler temperature than air within the cooking device **100** during operation, and may pass over magnetron **40** to cool magnetron **40** and/or other electrical components of cooking device **100** to cool the electrical components. Air that forms airflow **32** may cool other components of cooking device, such as, for example, other electrical components that may include a transformer, motor of a fan, and other components that heat may have a detrimental effect thereon. Advantageously, airflow being generated by cooling

system **80** that generates airflow **32** and also cools magnetron **40** and/or other components of cooking device **100**, eliminates a need for separate sources of airflow, one for each of airflow **32** and cooling air for magnetron **40** and/or other components of cooking device **100**. However, airflow **32** that accelerates the heat and/or steam being vented from cooking chamber **10** to duct **30** may be generated by a source that is separate from airflow being generated to cool magnetron **40** and/or other components of cooking device **100**, such as, for example, a fan that does not generate airflow in fluid and/or thermal communication with magnetron **40** and/or other components of cooking device **100**. This airflow may be generated from a different source than the cooling fan used to cool the magnetron and would be in the form of an additional cooling fan.

As shown in FIG. **4**, a fan **90** may be in fluid communication with cavity **14**. Fan **90** rotates to draw air from within housing **60** into cavity **14**, as shown by arrows **92**. Fan **90** may create an internal air pressure within cavity **14** which directs the heated air and/or steam to be vented, as shown by arrows **22**, into duct **30**. Alternatively, as the food is being heated, generally, heated air and/or steam is produced that increases pressure within cavity **14** that is vented, as shown by arrows **22**, into duct **30**. In addition, fan **90** may pass air over a heating element (not shown) to heat food within cavity **14** producing heated air and/or steam that increases pressure within cavity **14**. The increased pressure directs the heated air and/or steam to be vented, as shown by arrows **22**, into duct **30**.

The food may be heated by impingement, convection, microwave, radiant heat, or other heating device in fluid and/or thermal communication with cavity **14**. As shown in FIGS. **2** and **3**, the food placed within cavity **14** may be heated by a microwave device that includes magnetron **40**. The microwave device communicates microwaves to cavity **14**. The microwaves within cavity **14** heat the food.

In operation, the food (not shown) is placed within cavity **14** to be heated. The food may be heated by impingement, convection, microwave, radiant heat, or other heating device in fluid and/or thermal communication with cavity **14**. For example, the food is heated by the microwave device having magnetron **40** or fan **90** that passes air over a heating element heating airflow into cavity **14**. As the food is being heated, generally, heated air and/or steam is produced that increases pressure within cavity **14**, as well as, increased pressure generated by fan **90**. In order to relieve the pressure within cavity **14**, a portion of the heated air and/or steam is vented through pipe **20** to duct **30**, as shown by arrow **22**. The heated air and/or steam may be vented through pipe **20** directly to duct **30**. Alternatively, as shown in FIG. **4**, cavity **14** may be in fluid communication with duct **30** through a valve **70** to vent heated air and/or steam within cavity **14** when a predetermined pressure is exceeded to vent heated air and/or steam into duct **30**. The air and/or steam within the cavity **14** can be vented through a valve **70** when a positive pressure above ambient is reached. Fan **82** draws cool, filtered air into housing **60**, as shown by arrows **81**, between housing **60** and cooking chamber **10** past components of cooking device **100**, as shown by arrows **86** and **87**, such as, for example, electrical components, reducing a temperature thereof. Fan **82** creates an internal air pressure within housing **60** which forms airflow **32** within duct **30**. Airflow **32** accelerates the heated air and/or steam that is vented through to duct **30** from cavity **14** and forms exhaust gases or a combined airflow of the heated air and/or steam that is vented to duct **30** and air of airflow **32**. The combined airflow is exhausted through outlet **34** directly outside of cooking device **100** into the ambient environment. For example, the heat/steam vented from the cooking chamber can be accelerated to a velocity in the range of about 1 meters/second up to about 10 meters/second.

It has been found by the present disclosure that acceleration of the heated air and/or steam from cavity **14** by airflow **32** in duct **30** lowers a temperature and increases a velocity of the heated air and/or steam in comparison to heated air and/or steam that is vented directly into the ambient environment from cavity **14** that would be at a lower velocity and higher temperature. Advantageously, an effect on the ambient environment that the heated air and/or steam from cavity **14** that combines with airflow **32** is exhausted into is reduced over exhausting the heated air and/or steam without combining it with airflow **32**. For example, the heat/steam vented from the cooking chamber may be reduced in temperature within the range of about 200° Celsius/400° Fahrenheit by airflow **32** in duct **30**.

It has also been found by the present disclosure that that the acceleration of the heated air and/or steam from cavity **14** in duct **30** accelerates airborne particles within the heated air and/or steam and reduces a concentration of the airborne particles lower than heated air and/or steam vented directly out of cavity **14** without combining with airflow **32**. Advantageously, the lower concentration of the airborne particles within the combined airflow of the heated air and/or steam and airflow **32** reduces a likelihood of contamination of the ambient environment surrounding cooking device **100**, such as, condensing of the airborne particles to drip/stain/contaminate the oven or ambient environment, over airborne particles exhausted within the heated air and/or steam that is not combined with airflow **32**. The amount the concentration of the airborne particulate may be reduced to may be up to 13:1 by airflow **32** within duct **30**.

It should also be noted that the terms "first", "second", "third", "upper", "lower", "above", "below", and the like may be used herein to modify various elements. These modifiers do not imply a spatial, sequential, or hierarchical order to the modified elements unless specifically stated.

While the present disclosure has been described with reference to one or more exemplary embodiments, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes may be made and equivalents may be substituted for elements thereof without departing from the scope of the present disclosure. In addition, many modifications may be made to adapt a particular situation or material to the teachings of the disclosure without departing from the scope thereof. Therefore, it is intended that the present disclosure not be limited to the particular embodiment(s) disclosed as the best mode contemplated, but that the disclosure will include all embodiments falling within the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A cooking device comprising:

a cooking chamber that is heated to cook food producing an exhaust gas in an interior volume of said cooking chamber, said exhaust gas being selected from the group consisting of heated air, airborne particles, steam, and combinations thereof;

a housing surrounding said cooking chamber, said housing and said cooking chamber having a magnetron disposed therebetween;

a duct having a wall forming a first end opposite a second end and said wall being disposed between said cooking chamber and said housing, said duct being connected to said magnetron on said first end and forming an outlet through said housing at said second end of said duct;

a first fan that generates a first airflow between said housing and said cooking chamber to cool said magnetron and that thereafter flows into said duct, wherein said first fan

draws ambient air into the cooking device, and wherein said first airflow is outside of said cooking chamber, thereby avoiding the cooling of said food disposed in said cooking chamber, wherein said cooking chamber vents said exhaust gas to said duct by at least one of an apparatus selected from the group consisting of: an apparatus that heats said food to increase a pressure in said cooking chamber, and a second fan generating a second airflow which passes over a heating element into said cooking chamber, and wherein said exhaust gas that is vented to said duct is accelerated in said duct to a velocity in a range of about 1 meter/second up to about 10 meters/second by said first airflow in said duct and exhausted through said outlet out of said second end of said duct directly to an ambient environment outside of the cooking device.

2. The cooking device of claim **1**, wherein said first airflow accelerates said exhaust gas reducing a temperature of said exhaust gas.

3. The cooking device of claim **1**, wherein said first airflow accelerates said airborne particles lowering a concentration of said airborne particles.

4. The cooking device of claim **1**, wherein said magnetron communicates microwaves to said cooking chamber.

5. The cooking device of claim **1**, wherein said cooking chamber has a vent valve that vents said exhaust gas from said cooking chamber to said duct when a predetermined pressure is exceeded within said cooking chamber.

6. The cooking device of claim **1**, wherein said cooking chamber is an enclosure having said interior volume.

7. The cooking device of claim **6**, wherein said duct has said sidewall enclosing a duct volume.

8. The cooking device of claim **7**, wherein said interior volume is connected to said duct volume by a pipe.

9. The cooking device of claim **1**, wherein said first airflow combines with said exhaust gas and is directly exhausted outside of the cooking device.

10. The cooking device of claim **1**, wherein said airborne particles in said duct are reduced to 13:1 by airflow within said duct.

11. A cooking device comprising:

a cooking chamber that is heated to cook food producing an exhaust gas in an interior volume of said cooking chamber, said exhaust gas being selected from the group consisting of heated air, airborne particles, steam, and combinations thereof;

a housing surrounding said cooking chamber;

a magnetron between said housing and said cooking chamber;

a duct having a wall forming an inlet at a first end and an outlet at a second end and said wall between said housing and said cooking chamber, said magnetron being connected to said inlet, and said outlet being through said housing at said second end opposite said first end;

a pipe that connects said interior volume to said duct, said pipe being smaller than said duct;

a first fan that generates a first airflow that contacts said magnetron and that thereafter passes through said duct, wherein said first airflow draws ambient air into the cooking device, and wherein said first airflow is outside of said cooking chamber, thereby avoiding the cooling of said food disposed in said cooking chamber,

wherein said cooking chamber vents said exhaust gas through said pipe into said duct, and wherein said exhaust gas that is vented is accelerated in said duct by said first airflow to a velocity in a range of about 1 meter/second up to about 10 meters/second, and said exhaust gas being exhausted through said outlet out of said second end of said duct directly to an ambient environment outside of the cooking device,

wherein said cooking chamber vents said exhaust gas to said duct by an apparatus selected from the group consisting of: an apparatus that heats said food to increase a pressure in said cooking chamber, and a second fan generating a second airflow which passes over a heating element into said cooking chamber.

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